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1946 *Ballots*

ONE OF the great troubles about having a Tuesday press day is that it makes comments on our own American elections invariably difficult. The dreadful possibilities involved in sticking one's neck out seriously inhibit any temptations to exercise whatever gift of prophecy one may believe one has; and to have to reserve comment until a week after the event leaves you with the feeling that everything possible has already been said. Hence we can only say with certainty that by the time this issue of THE COMMONWEAL reaches its readers, those same readers will know positively far more about who has been elected than we can possibly know as we write this paragraph.

But certain events to which allusion has already been made in these columns deserve a special comment all their own. These events were the removal from the official New York ballot of all the minor parties save those which had themselves nominated the regular Democratic candidates for Governor and United States Senator. Specifically, these included the Socialist Party, the Socialist Workers Party and the Socialist Labor Party ("Industrial Government Party"). The Communist Party likewise had charges filed against it. Yet it is to be noted that when the Communist Party withdrew its own gubernatorial candidate in favor of Mr. Mead—the Democratic candidate—the courts allowed the CP to remain on the ballot, while denying this right to the other three which were principled enough to have nominated candidates of their own.

Technically the courts were quite justified in what they did, since it was shown that clerical errors appeared on the nominating petitions of the parties involved. Yet it is a safe bet that similar clerical errors in profusion could have been discovered on the nominating petitions of *all* the political parties, had any interested persons had the means and the resources really to verify them. It would have been a fitting irony had it been possible to have done so, thus putting it up to the courts to decide whether New York State voters should have been confronted a ballot containing only Republicans and Democrats.

The moral of this incident has application in almost every state in the Union. For New York's election laws are, if anything, among the more liberal. It is today virtually impossible for any but the Republican and Democratic parties to run candidates for office in about half of the states. In most of the rest of the states, since to err is human, other parties can appear on the ballot only by sufferance of the larger parties which have the means to finance fishing expeditions for irregularities. What is badly needed to implement American democracy is a general reform of our state election laws.

Housing Demagogy

DURING the recently deceased elections, almost everywhere in the country candidates talked about housing (particularly for veterans). This talk, in almost every instance, sounded reverberatingly hollow. The voters all agreed that the housing situation is terrible. The candidates all agreed that the other parties and men were harming and not helping the situation; they all agreed that they and their own parties would fix things up wonderfully. It was nearly all beautifully and freely demagogic. We would like to capitalize the irresponsible atmosphere to add our own. . . .

The housing problem is insoluble in a too centralized, over-urbanized, mass-industry, over-economic system like the one we have going. Housing is too deep in the heart of the faltering "system"—and not simply the "property system." The contradictions and failures and wastes of the whole business bear down on housing from every angle, and the accumulated mass is too great. In addition to all the direct problems of prices and costs and materials and labor and production methods and capacities, there are other and more general problems, such as taxation policies, traffic impossibilities for passengers, shipping and especially transshipping wastes, the wasteful concentration of the production of too many commodities in one or a few places when it ought to

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be spread around: in general, the cumulatively more absurd relation of people to the land and water and earth altogether, and the increasingly lost sense of what a building for work or for a home ought to be.

It is, naturally, true that possible palliatives have not been well worked out, nor sincerely and intelligently tried. But in this demagogic season, the palliatives don't seem interesting, anyway.

What ought to be done is a revolution. What is more likely is a stumbling series of too little and too late palliatives: wasteful, inadequate, in a way corrupting, minimumly beneficial part-measures (like the proposition we assume was adopted in New York, authorizing the State to increase its annual housing subsidy up to $9,000,000). Another great likelihood is an increasingly complete loss from our desires and ideas and traditions of satisfying and worthy concepts of houses for work, and for homes, and, generally, for tolerable living.

The Press

THE BRITISH are to have a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the British press. The measure was proposed by two Laborite journalist members of Parliament but the vote adopting it, 270 to 157, did not follow party lines and sixty Labor members voted against it. The Commission has the following purposes:

> (1) To inquire into the ownership control and financing of national and provincial newspapers, news agencies and periodicals;
> (2) The extent to which the growth of powerful chains of newspapers was creating a monopoly of newspaper ownership;
> (3) The ability of independent and local newspapers and periodicals to withstand increased competition from syndicate companies;
> (4) The influence of financial and advertising interests on the presentation and suppression of news;
> (5) Distortion and suppression of essential facts in home and foreign news.

It all sounds as if things were very bad indeed, and it sound also as if it were the program for an American inquiry into the conditions of the American press. In England, an opponent of the establishment of the Commission complained that it would "create suspicions in the public mind, not only here but abroad," and another member said: "Let the press look after its own affairs, and let Parliament not cry shame to the outside world about the most honorable press in the entire world." That also is what would be said in America if Congress were asked to institute a similar commission. But it is not a question of creating suspicion or of crying shame; in England and in America it is simply that there are a certain number of facts, and when you look at them you cannot help thinking that freedom in the communication of news and opinion may well be threatened.

In England there is the simple fact, for instance, that Viscount Kemsley has twenty newspapers and more than 10,000,000 readers. In America there is the simple fact that suit had to be brought before Mr. Marshall Field could obtain membership in the AP without which his Chicago newspaper could not compete with Colonel McCormick's *Tribune*. There are the facts of bigness and concentration of control.

Mr. Herbert L. Matthews, from whose dispatch in the New York *Times*, October 30, all quotes are taken, says that "the central source of anxiety felt by those demanding a Royal Commission is that a great many newspapers have been swallowed up by big combines or chains, that the provincial independent newspapers are fast disappearing, and that the press of Britain has been falling more and more into the hands of a few 'press lords.'" That, except for our not knowing anyone called Lord Scripps-Howard (the title would sound well), is very much the process which has been taking place in America and which has been described so vigorously by Mr. Morris Ernst in "The First Freedom." If the British are worried we are worried also, and if we both worry enough we shall keep our freedom.

Louisville's Industrial Peace

IT IS PRINTED back in the rear pages of the papers (page 29 of a recent New York *Times*, for one), but still, what has been going on in Louisville, Ky., for the past three months sounds like first-page stuff.

The Mayor, E. Leland Taylor, started things by appointing a city Labor-Management Committee modeled on the Toledo, Ohio, plan. But this group of six business executives, six labor leaders and six presumably disinterested citizens representing the public soon developed methods of their own. Scarcely was the eighteen-man committee organized when the CIO United Public Workers Union called the 125 municipal garbage tippers out on strike. This dispute was still in the process of negotiation under the beneficent auspices of the committee when the AFL Central Labor Union threatened a general city-wide strike on behalf of the local policemen—demanding union recognition and better pay.

Besides settling these critical disputes the committee has also forestalled two major walkouts: in the local building industry and in the city-owned Louisville Water Company. These are solid single achievements and in the course of arriving at peaceful, compromise settlements the committee has won the confidence of business men, union members and the community generally. A typical sentiment is expressed by Herbert L. Monsky of the local CIO United Public Workers in a letter to the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. He

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states clearly that he is not in agreement with everything the committee has done and that he is quite critical of some of its conclusions. Yet he says in general: "I am greatly impressed by the committee, what it has done, and its great possibilities for making an important contribution to the industrial peace of our community. . . ."

Perhaps the chief element in this record of community achievement is the spirit of the committeemen. They receive no compensation for their services and pay whatever expenses are involved out of their own pockets. Hearings alone in the tippers' case took over twenty hours, consultations and committee discussions many more. Ultimately the thoroughness, firmness, patience and fair spirit of the committee brought the necessary concessions from both sides.

Representing the public in Louisville are Mark Ethridge, veteran southern journalist and now publisher of the *Courier-Journal* and Louisville *Times;* Professor Charles W. Williams and Dean Ford C. Wilkenson of the University of Louisville; Lewis W. Cole, Sr., retired chain store operator; Circuit Judge Eugene Hubbard and Federal Judge Roy Shelbourne. The war called forth many similar groups of distinguished citizens to serve in like capacities in all parts of the land. Such men can be enlisted again, as in Louisville, in these troubled peace times.

All this is not to say that here is the long-awaited American management-labor panacea. The Louisville group may face serious snags in coming months despite their brilliant beginning. And local industrial conditions vary widely throughout the United States. Nonetheless it would be an excellent idea if after the elections a number of seriously interested municipal officials, business or business association executives and union leaders should entrain for Kentucky to discover at first hand just how such constructive arbitration is brought about.

Give Austria a Hand

EXCEPT for physical devastation Austria faces as difficult conditions as any land in postwar Europe. It is under occupation and division by four competing occupation powers. The nation's economy, never viable in the years between the wars, has been further ground down by German occupation, military defeat and current political and economic control by occupying authorities. There are severe shortages of food, shoes and clothing.

Despite these and other serious handicaps the Austrians have shown themselves to be tremendously spunky. They have resisted what they considered undue encroachments by the occupying powers (notably Russia). They have worked out with Italy a mutually agreeable compromise on the long-disputed Tyrol. And now the Austrian Parliament has the courage to instruct Chancellor Figl by a unanimous vote to press for restoration of full Austrian sovereignty. Objectives include the ending of military occupation, removal of trade barriers and currency restrictions and securing membership in the United Nations. Since Austrian occupation is a Russian pretext for the maintenance of military supply lines (and large forces) in neighboring countries, there is a further reason for supporting these Austrian demands.

"The Subconscious Takes Over"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, an interesting and intelligent newspaper with a name to scare good people, printed as one of its special articles at the end of October a summary of another of the current triumphs of science. It came under the head, *"Sell by Smell,"* and sounded for certain like one more brave new world well conquered:

> Hundred industries add and subtract scents; find perfume pays off. As ad-writers all realized, perfume is not a logical substance. It appeals to the subconscious. And you know what the subconscious is like. . . .
>
> Consumers were shown identical pairs of hosiery, one unnoticeably scented, the other unscented. Preference was shown the scented hose—because, people said, it had "better texture," or "more appealing color." . . .
>
> George J. Tombak, leading du Pont's perfume effort, claims the industry plant now spurring workers' output with mood-music could do even better by releasing mood-fragrances. Disruptive tensions would be relieved, says he. . . .
>
> And the ambitions of perfume makers have no discernible limits.

The new perfumes referred to are, quite evidently, synthetic, not made from things like jasmine, which costs $2,000 a pound, or from natural essential oils of oranges, lemons and things. These are coal tar derivitives and such—"they're usually identified by a catalog number." Well, we hope they will give us the stimuli for good, cheap fun, but at the moment the air conditioned atmosphere seems down just a bit too near freezing.

The Imagination Plays

The imagination, whose play about the Balkan peninsula has been unwholesomely stimulated by so much for so long, received another prod recently in the conscientious press:

> Trieste, Nov. 2. (U.P.) [published 2 Nov.] Albanian shore batteries opened fire on the 7,720-ton British cruiser *Leander* and damaged her with a direct hit on the superstructure, British officers reported early today when the ship put into Trieste for repairs.

Then comes the next day:

> Trieste, Nov. 2. (U.P.) Capt. R. J. O. Otway-Ruthven, commander of the British cruiser *Leander*, today corrected reports by fellow-officers that the warship had been damaged by fire from Albanian shore batteries. He said they had "let their imaginations run away with them."
>
> "No shots of any sort were directed at the ship," Captain Otway-Ruthven said.

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The Hangings at Nuremberg

The truth was not allowed to emerge

George N. Shuster

DURING THE SUMMER of 1933, we saw them getting ready at Nuremberg for a meeting of the Party. Trees had been cut down in the old forests and hauled in to stand along the streets so that brown banners with red swastikas on them might float high in such breeze as there was. "Some day brown shirts will hang from those trees," my wife said. She was right. It took a long time, a tragically long time, but they dangled in the end. Only not from trees. Probably one should not have expected that the imagination of the victors would suffice to create so apt and impressive a stage setting—to deck out the ruins of Nuremberg with trees and flags from the midst of which the bodies of Europe's butchers might have fluttered as symbols of the nihilism which for a time they ushered in.

Or can it be that there is something about these ruins which takes the starch out of avenging righteousness? I remember that there once was an august commission of folks supposed to know a great deal about European art and committed to seeing that it did not perish under the onslaught of war. Maybe they had never happened to hear of the ancient guild city in which Albrecht Duerer had a house. One surmises that they may even now vaguely recall Duerer, because after all his name is pretty far up near the front of the alphabet. But perhaps they did not realize that he once lived in a house glorious among other glorious houses built in days of craftsmen whose like we shall never see again.

One could, as one read about the trials, not help knowing that the forlorn shambles of Nuremberg have been bequeathed to us who invented the atomic bomb. That bomb came to mind again when I read about how Goering had craftily cheated the hangman by swallowing a pinch of cyanide. At Mondorf jail a year ago I talked for two days with Goering. One of the matters we discussed was why Germany had declared war on the United States. I said that it was at least conceivable that if Hitler had gone to the Reichstag and strongly deplored the kind of attack the Japanese had made at Pearl Harbor (and it must be noted that he had no advance knowledge, absolutely no trace of advance knowledge, of this attack), probably no more American ships would have headed for Europe until the war in the Pacific was over. Goering replied that if he believed this he would go upstairs and commit suicide. I remarked politely that in the view of the precautions taken by his jailers that might be difficult. He smiled sardonically and said, "A man can take his life any time he wants to, Herr Professor!"

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Now humanity has its own little collective capsule of poison. This has been compounded with loving care by the most eminent scientists, at great expense, and carefully submitted to experimental tests. From this time forward, humanity will realize that it can commit suicide any time it desires. Maybe, for all the living know, cyanide inside an individual makes comparatively as much noise as uranium does on the world's doorstep. It really doesn't matter. The important thing, after all, is not noise but death. Whenever we want to, we of our time can die together. No provision need be made for the women, the children and the funeral expenses. We can take the fretful midge we inhabit to the cosmic pawnshop and never even bother to ask for a ticket.

Therewith Goering has become very interesting. Had he been brought before a firing squad in the bustling days after Remagen Bridge, nobody would think of him any more except occasionally as a wicked fat man with a row of bullets across his chest. But now he has become a crude, ugly but unforgettable symbol of the little explosive asp which humanity can press against its side. I sometimes think that if we could only make that fact stick, if we could only rub it in hard enough, the whole of what has happened at Nuremberg would be worth while.

For, quite frankly, looked at in any other light the moral of the show is no bigger than a dime under a bed. The fact that bad men got what was coming to them is beside the point. With the exception of Goering and the soldiers the condemned were just a curious lot of racist fanatics, once welded into the spearhead of a mass movement by the fear of Bolshevism which ran high in Central Europe twenty-five years ago. Some of them, like Frick, were relatively honest cranks, with minds no wider than the page of a pamphlet.

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Others, like Rosenberg, were halfbreeds sprung from the chaotic commingling of peoples which has produced Eastern Europe and obscenely ashamed of their origins. As one talked to them it became increasingly impossible to grasp the fact that here were the apostles of Nazism, who had once successfully sold a strangely perverse doctrine to the world. You listened to an old soak like Ley, in whom some faint glimmerings of the mind of an industrial engineer still survived, or to that fantastic opportunist idiot whose name was Ribbentrop, and the whole business just didn't make sense. How did they manage? Of course the reason was in part that the three evil geniuses of the movement—Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler—were not there. And yet these men one tried to question had once been the pillars of a mighty state.

And so, though I may be wrong, I can see no trace of an explanation of why we should have spent a whole year and money enough to start a bank on trying to prove that Julius Streicher, for example, was a filthy and immoral anti-Semitic lout who deserved to be hanged. The trial came up with nothing about him that we didn't already know, nor about his cronies. Therefore the true significance of what Mr. Justice Jackson and his associates were doing could be deduced only from the treatment meted out to the soldiers and to Goering. One word must suffice about the soldiers. It is true that Keitel was a square-jawed, vain, and militarily untutored ass, and that Jodl was a shifty yesman. But we may as well admit that probably not a single responsible American officer, from General Eisenhower on down, has failed to gulp at the sentences imposed. How can the civilian disassociate himself from them? When soldiers fail to do what they are told, there will be no more soldiers.

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There unfortunately remains Goering. He was not a ranting anti-Semite. In all probability he was not even a war-monger. Goering was a spoiled air force officer who couldn't find his way back into civilian life, a crafty adventurer, an unscrupulous buccaneer, and a brutal commander of men. There can be no doubt that he was brave to the point of bravado, extremely intelligent, wholly uninhibited, and madly athirst for power. He loved jewels and wore an orchid-colored uniform which proves anything or nothing. We underestimated his gifts and misread his character, so that we allotted to him all the room he wanted on the stage where he played his final rôle. He read his lines frighteningly well. There is every reason to believe that in a Europe once more ominously threatened with communistic rule he will live on as the hero in one sort of dream about how communism might be opposed. He is the fellow who put the communists in jail and beat their brains out.

It is not possible to exaggerate the importance of such a myth. The only way the dream of fighting fire with fire and devils with devils can be dispelled is by creating a reality inside which fire can be fought with water and devils with angels. To say the same thing in plain language: the only chance democracy has to create a reign of peace and reason is by establishing law. Now the trouble with Mr. Jackson's attempt to help create such a law was from the beginning that it rested upon the assumption that a war-time mirage could be trusted. That is, the court was convened in the belief that the only atrocities were nazi atrocities, and the only menace to peace the nazi menace. At the time we applauded and so did Europe, because the memory of the horrible deeds committed by the Hitlerites was so vivid that nothing else seemed important or even interesting.

But in a little while Europe began to remember that there had been other atrocities and that there was another menace. Twenty-five years is a lot of summers and winters, but they can be recalled. Europe began to think once more of what happened in Hungary under Bela Kun; of the Polish armies that in 1918 stood on the outskirts of beleaguered Warsaw; and of the tales told through the years along the Baltic Sea. Indeed, how should these things have been forgotten when through every hole in the Iron Curtain evidence began to pour that 1946 was just like 1918? Who can explain the stiffening of all the pro-Democratic forces in Europe if he does not see that this stiffening is a response to tragic and fearful fact? Who, if he has been reared in it, can forget what slave labor means—for only one example?

Everybody still agreed that Belsen was a horrible place, and that the murders done in Auschwitz could never be satisfactorily avenged. But they also knew that massacre and forced labor in Poland and Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany, were likewise malignantly evil. Mr. Jackson, however, was not in a position to admit that these things were so. On the bench sat a Russian judge, and over and above that bench sat Four Powers. The indictment could therefore not be altered. It said that aggressive war is a crime against humanity. I think most people would have been willing to go along with this despite sincere qualms as to whether you could condemn such war in fact before it had been condemned in law. But what were you going to say when one of the judges represented a nation which was also patently guilty of aggressive war?

Of this, as the months dragged on, there could

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be no possible doubt. Fact after fact leaked out, though Nuremberg was compelled to act as if nobody had ever heard of any of them. It was not merely that the case of Finland came to mind again—little Finland which had to be conquered because it might sometime be a base serviceable to the enemy. No, the details of the Stalin-Hitler Pact of 1939, and of subsequent pacts, were all stark naked in the documents. It was as clear as day that the two dictators had agreed to divide Poland between them, and that in addition they had arranged to share between them most valuable military goods. Even these revelations could have been rejected as proof of complicity, on the ground that in view of the attitude of western nations the nazi war machine was so dire a menace to his country that Stalin was justified in resorting to any protective measures that would save time. When, however, it was discovered that the Russian government had been willing to cement the alliance in any manner deemed desirable, provided only that Hitler would agree to a number of conditions the most important of which was Russian control of the Dardanelles, there was no longer any room for doubt. In any man's language, the Russians had been in aggressive war up to their noses and beyond.

It is of course true that Hitler was the primordial architect of the brutal tragedy. But the fact remains that only one of Europe's great powers was willing to cooperate with him in a really big way, for even Mussolini was concerned primarily with trying to sneak a few tons of hay out of the burning barn. To declare under such circumstances that international law banning aggressive warfare would be enforced by the Nuremberg tribunial was to invite question. To do so when one of the judges was a Russian judge was as perilous and perhaps as farcical a juridical enterprise as history had known. Neither accumulated sympathy with the brave Russian people, nor even the fact that Russia, too, had been a target for ruthless German assault, would suffice to disguise the weakness of Mr. Jackson's position as soon as fear of communism began to spread in Europe once again.

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We cannot escape the consequences. Nuremberg did not leave in the European mind the sort of impression which the spectacle was designed to evoke. Instead it brought to the foreground once more half-buried aspects of the struggle through which the Continent has been living since the opening of the century—the struggle to see whether the limitations placed on the use of power by the traditional Western respect for personal freedom can be conserved despite the "strong men" of the Left and Right. The grim details of the history of our time will be understood only when they are seen in the light of this struggle. And because the consciousness of Europe is slowly beginning to concern itself with making a pattern of those details, Nuremberg failed. For it did not succeed in providing an answer. Everybody knows that if another war broke out now, the question to be asked in the end would not be "Who started it?" but "Who won?" In short the issue would be not justice but success. And the one thing the world needs is justice.

That is why I come back to the myth of Goering. If all there is to the art of politics is being stronger than your opponent, and ready to hit the other fellow before he hits you, then Goering was right. But if that art can find its proper form only when men realize that human action must be correlated with the moral law which governs the conduct of mankind just as surely as natural law governs the marshaling of stars and the mysterious routine of the atom, then Goering was wrong. The only thing that counts now is to make this quite clear.

During the two hundred years which followed the Thirty Years' War, those responsible for the teaching of statesmanship and philosophy tried hard to make emerge a code of ethics which when it could not be made applicable to peace would at least govern the conduct of war. One has only to read the lives of Wellington and of Grant, of Lee and even Moltke, in order to see that for these sterling soldiers, war was not merely the fighting but also the peace. It is not a coincidence that the clearest vision of the settlement to follow the Civil War was, after Lincoln's, that of Sherman. The great master of the warfare of invasion was also an educated citizen.

True enough, those who planned and conducted the drama of Nuremberg were not unmindful of these things. But they could not extricate them from the ruins into which civilization had fallen. For this they are no more to blame than the rest of us. Surely it is high time to think clearly and to talk plainly. The sinister half truth which the nazis and their stooges have kept on repeating, over and over ad nauseam is: "We could find no other way to cope with the communists. Now let's see what you can do!" The answer is not easy to find. I remember that when I went over to interview Franz von Papen the sun was shining on the house inside voluminous walls of barbed wire where he was held a prisoner. Then I suddenly saw a pair of bare legs drooping down from a window sill. Those were Papen's legs. He was as proud of them as a collector is of his Corots, and bent on giving them a comely coat of tan. Well, Papen had always been a man for legs. Round and round Europe he went, making pacts between the con-

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servatism he misrepresented and the Devil he failed to comprehend. We can do as much, if we insist. We can talk over here and over there, without stopping to look the nazi half-truth in the eye.

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To cope with communism means vowing fidelity to a political and social code from which we have no intention of flinching; being strong and yet neither bellicose nor brutal; attempting always the difficult task of propagating our creed with actions as well as words; and insisting that the world we will have anything to do with must be free. It is clear that to date we have stumbled badly, and that more often than it is pleasant to remember we have been naïve when we thought we were playing poker. But I think we may at last be finding ourselves—knowing that while we cannot for a moment hold with Goering that the easiest way to settle matters with the Russians would be to wipe them out, it is absurd to suppose with Henry Wallace that the only "problem" is whether "two economic systems" can get along together.

The way to win out in this battle is to realize that "dialectical materialism" may be quite enchanting as a theme for half-baked conversation among intellectuals who have not yet grown up, but that otherwise it is old chatter reminiscent of dialogue in the movies of long ago. Our world has long since changed the subject, and the only trouble is that as yet we ourselves have had very little to say. We need words that make sense, if we cannot find words with wings. Let us hammer out some ideas just as efficiently as we have hammered out armor. You can these days lift the Iron Curtain more easily with truth and bitter irony than you can raise it with bombs. The Russians have said everything they have to say and the audience is bored. Let us go out and speak our piece. A whole world is waiting to hear it and when we talk like men there may even be applause.

Nuremberg is not our piece. It was just bad advertising. The fact that counts about it is not whether somebody was hanged who shouldn't have been hanged, or that somebody was let off easy who should have gone to jail, but that the truth was not told. Our place in the world will not be decided by this, any more than it is permanently endangered because some GI's have turned out to be awful rotters and the poor President's smile is not always a portent of sunshine. The peril lies in our incessant sentimentality, our unwillingness to admit that the road has a bend in it because it looks straight on our maps, and our lack of respect for the hard function of the intelligence.

Communications

"GRAUSTARK AND THE INDIANS"

Brewster, Mass.

TO the Editors: It is not often that one finds in THE COMMONWEAL a letter such as that of Mr. Beltranena-Villadares, which sets up straw dragons to be conveniently knocked down, misquotes, deliberately misinterprets, bases some of its more vicious statements on phrases like "hard to believe" and "not likely true," and in the end has demonstrated almost nothing except its writer's rather pale spleen.

The National Police are now known as the Guardia Civil and there is so little difference in the two organizations that when the revolt of 1944 is spoken of in Guatemala, people nod toward any Guardia Civil who happen to be nearby and speak of them as those who were hunted in the streets during that October.

Death as the penalty for the second conviction of theft may not have been the written law under Ubico but it was the fact, as some dozens of the old Guatemala hands have told me. Ubico, like the French king, was the state and it was not uncommon for him to promulgate a law by word of mouth. Such unwritten laws were most strictly enforced, largely because Ubico was conscious of them as his own rather than his predecessors'. Mr. Beltranena-Valladares was apparently an Ubicoite until it became no longer fashionable or safe to be such in Guatemala. That Ubico had paranoid tendencies is demonstrated by his prohibition on foreign entertainers and similar restriction. That Ubico judged people by the shape of their heads is fairly common knowledge. That I mentioned this in my article in an attempt to "overlook the importance of Ubico's régime" is something Mr. Beltranena-Valladares has conveniently dreamed up. Guatemala achieved a good deal of stability and outward order under Ubico, at what a cost Mr. Beltranena-Valladares knows well.

Arevalo was so close to the Junta that it was natural to think of him as part of it although he did not return to Guatemala until the revolt had succeeded. The Junta was efficient as such in the days immediately following the revolt; it was after its individuals had achieved office that it ceased to be effective, Arana being the exception. Incidentally, the suspension of the civil guarantees during much of 1945 must be one of Mr. Beltranena-Valladares's ideas of competence. The Junta was still referred to as governing Guatemala when I was there and Arevalo taken for granted as being a part of it.

Even making allowance for Mr. Beltranena-Valladares's not always precise use of English, I don't quite see how my statement that the students were opposed to Arevalo is particularly "daring." At all student demonstrations I witnessed or heard, there was much thinly veiled criticism of Arevalo (such talk must still be largely indirect in Guatemala) and extremely derogatory cartoons were distributed at these meetings and published in many of the new periodicals.

I did not "state that the present government is more

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friendly to the Church that Ubico's." I wrote that it "was perhaps slightly more friendly." I based this remark on such tangible or real evidence as there being more priests actually functioning as such in Guatemala under this government than under Ubico's. I feel this is a more realistic basis for an appraisal than such things as concordats, Eucharistic Congresses and the like. Again, the priests were limited to a hundred under Ubico whether that law was written or not. Incidentally, almost all the priests I spoke to in Guatemala were conscious that in numbers they exceeded a limitation which had been enforced for many years. Mr. Beltranena-Valladares's too bland insistence on the absence of certain "written" laws indicates either ignorance concerning an important phenomenon of this country or a deliberate quibble.

If the popularity of the Spanish priests "can be proved easily" I wish Mr. Beltranena-Valladares would do so. In the six months I lived in his country I traveled and talked with American priests, the acting apostolic delegate, foreign service officers and business men; none of them had a good word for the Spanish priests. And since he is so anxious to imply that I am a liar regarding the travelers checks, I can only reply in kind and say that he is a liar. I saw the checks in question. The Spanish priest signing them sat in plain view in the Bank of London and South America; and my attention was called to him by an officer of the bank who happens to be a Catholic. It occurred in February of this year and what Mr. Beltranena-Valladares's reference to 1944 means I wouldn't know.

Nor do I know of the "serious communistic tendencies" he speaks of. If I was blind in being thus ignorant during my stay in Guatemala, so was one of the most intelligent FBI units posted in Latin-America. So are the largest *fincas* in Guatemala, men likely to be the first affected by any serious communist trend.

As for my "being an instrument of local politics," I have been a reporter for most of a generation (23 years, to be exact) and the always obvious pressures of Latin-American *politicos* is a fairly old story. Mr. Beltranena-Valladares is about average obvious.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

"CLASS WAR"

Atlantic City, N. J.

TO the Editors: The article entitled "Class War" by John C. Cort in your August 16 issue, seems to me to demand comment as being demagogic, intemperate and injurious to the Catholic action movement. These movements wish to bring the Church's message to non-Catholics in a reasoned, kindly way so as to bring conviction and belief to the citizens of the United States.

This article is evidently motivated by a determination to force your readers to approve blindly everything Walter Reuther may suggest. The fact that last spring his erroneous ideas about wage-price formulas during the strike of General Motors have been a factor in breaking down our economy are evidently of no importance to your editors.

This article indulges in name-calling, a practice which it ill becomes THE COMMONWEAL to indulge in. Advocacy of the UAW in its continuing strikes in the suppliers' plants, thus causing breakdown of production, again shows a lack of temperance and wisdom.

Worst of all, because the attack is lacking in justice, as well as good taste, is the disparaging mention of Henry Ford II, who, because he has espoused the Catholic Faith bravely, must perforce endorse all the economic theories of Walter Reuther. Failing to do this, he lays himself open to mean innuendoes from your magazine.

ANNA H. C. DANFORTH.

AMERICAN AUTHORS' AUTHORITY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: May I offer some comments suggested by the meeting of writers held at the Henry Hudson Hotel on October 22, 1946. This is the meeting which Mr. James M. Cain addressed, and at which I was hissed, and ruled out of order by the chairman, Mr. Carl Carmer, for having asked questions pertinent to the proposed AAA plan. You mention this meeting in an editorial, "American Authors Debate," in your issue of November 1, 1946.

As you imply, James M. Cain came to New York with a contemptuous attitude toward writers. He said that three-quarters of them consider discussions of economics to be below them. At the meeting, I discovered that while discussions of economics may not be below Cain, they are most certainly beyond him. In the course of his address, he stated that a book or other piece of writing is not a commodity: it is a property. I questioned him concerning this statement. I said that it was confusing to me, and asked him to explain how he differentiated a property and a commodity. His answer was, in substance, as follows: When a taxicab is manufactured and sold to an individual driver, it is a commodity, not a property. But after it is sold to the driver, then it is no longer a commodity: it is a property. I remarked that then, the service sold by the driver is the commodity. He said that this statement was beyond him. I asked him if he would give his definition of a commodity. He refused to answer me. In an article, "Just What Is the AAA?", printed in *The Screen Writer* for October, 1946, Cain also draws an analogy between original writings and taxicabs. He declares that the AAA plan for a copyright pool is the same as though a group of independent taxicab drivers were to form an association, and assigned the title of their vehicles to such an association. This association would then take over the defense of drivers in the case of lawsuits, difficulties with the police, tax assessments and so on. He limits this analogy, however, by pointing out that taxis depreciate, but that copyrights do not always depreciate in value. All this shows that Cain fails to see that there is often a contradiction between the money value and the artistic value of a piece of writing. He views writing only in terms of what can be realized on it. A book is no different to him from a taxicab. This same attitude is revealed in the contemptuous manner in which he has described writers as vain, conceited and as thinking that they are God-like. A book becomes a commodity in our society. It can also be a work of art. Its value as

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a commodity is measured and established by the conditions of the book market, and more generally, of the whole market for cultural commodities. As a work of art, a book cannot be measured. The value of a work of art can be described as *a human value*. If the human values of books are rendered secondary to the commodity value of a book, the basis is laid for the corruption of literature. James Cain, and a number of other screen writers who are pushing the plan for establishing an AAA, really equate these values. Behind this equation, one can deduce an unstated premise. This premise is more or less as follows: the major purpose of writing a book is to sell the same book for filmization. When Cain, then, says that most writers consider economics below them, he is only making a confused statement. He does not mean economics in any theoretical or scientific sense. He means business. And he is wrong. It is a patent fact that more and more American writers have shown that they are interested in writing mainly as a business. At the Henry Hudson meeting, Cain also compared the AAA to a bank. His language, his analogies are significant. An association which must have such an orientation cannot be a protector of the artistic interests of writers.

At the Henry Hudson meeting, a member of the audience cried out against the idea of writers starving in bohemia. We might say that bohemia is the cultural ghetto into which capitalism often has driven the artist. But an opponent of the Cain plan isn't, in consequence, a defender of the idea of keeping artists in bohemian ghettoes. Defenders of the Cain plan, writers and alleged writers who do not like to let adversaries express their views at public meetings are, however, developing this confusing impression. The problem of making a living is not the only one which the serious writer faces. He must struggle to make a living in order to write something that he wants or needs to write. If he does manage to make a living, even a good living, it does not follow that he will solve his other problems. Hollywood is now the classic example of this obvious fact in American letters. The motion picture industry has bought up the talents of a large number of the promising writers of America. Many of these writers went to Hollywood with the intention of making a stake so that they could write what they considered would be their own stuff. But they are now fairly well integrated into the commercial structure of American culture. The fight they have to make to defend and advance their economic interests in terms of this commercial structure of American culture is understandable. But they are making their fight on the basis of confusions, confusions between the commodity value of writing, and the human and artistic values of writing. Cain, with his contemptuous references to the artist, has crudely laid out the formulae for establishing this equation in the public mind. And the packed throng of writers who went to hear him speak, and to hiss those who ask questions, did not challenge nor comment on this aspect of his views.

When he was a rather young man (and not rich either), Karl Marx stated in a letter: "Is a press which degrades itself to a trade free? A writer should most certainly earn money in order to exist and write, but he should not exist and write in order to earn money. . . . The freedom of the press must consist in its emancipation from commerce. The writer who degrades the press to a mere means of material livelihood deserves as a punishment for this inner slavery that outer slavery called censorship unless his very existence is already his punishment." Behind this statement, a stern demand is laid on the writer. It is the demand that freedom for the writer be placed above the demands of material gain. Shall we say, therefore, that it is also a defense of bohemianism in the sense that it expresses the wilful desire for writers to starve? To do so would be stupid, if not monstrous. Not only by direct statement, but also by language, analogy, metaphor, Cain and many other defenders of his plan stress the aspect of material gain in writing.

Thus, in *The Screen Writer* of October, 1946, there is also an article by Lester Cole, titled: "Re: . . . Coming of Age . . ." Mr. Cole is one of the vocal defenders of the AAA, and a leading spirit in the Screen Writers Guild. He says in this article: "I would like to believe that most of us, squarely faced with the question, would readily admit that our ability to 'face our medium' will weigh out in direct proportion to the size of our bank accounts. Franklin Roosevelt said it well when he stated that there would never be complete democracy without economic democracy. And if democracy includes freedom of thought, as I believe it does, then we will never have that freedom to express ourselves in our medium without the essential ingredient of economic security. When the circumstances force writers to accept whatever assignments they can get, they do so with one thought in mind: do the best job you can, get the highest pay you can for it, and try to put aside money toward a day when you can afford the time to write what you prefer to write."

The living writer might just as well consciously accept the fact that as long as he lives, he will face the choice of putting his values or his pocketbook first. The commercial structure of American culture will not permit an equation of values and pocketbook. He must either accept premises such as those of Cain or Cole, or else premises which make the defense of his values primary. The second premise will demand greater material risks than the first. The AAA will not change this situation. It will most likely stabilize and tie the writers of America organizationally into the commercial structure of American culture.

In a letter to Elmer Rice, President of the Authors League of America, I expressed my willingness to support any principled effort of the Screen Writers to fight for better conditions. I am making the full text of this letter public in a forthcoming issue of *The Call*. However, this does not mean that independent writers must be hitched to the chariot of the screen writers. The AAA plan threatens to do just this. Whether or not Cain realized what he was doing, the logic of his position demanded that he express only contempt for the writer, and that he degrade the conception of the artist to the level of low caricature. The artist must not ask anything for himself that he would not ask for all human beings. But when he insists that he wants to fight in order to explore

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the nature of experience, in order to express himself in accordance with his needs, his values, his tensions, his own joys and sorrows, then he is not saying that he is God-like, a Cain describes him. He is merely saying that he will struggle to be and to remain a functioning human being. And leaving aside all other considerations, the attitudes, the premises, the very language of Cain and others can well tell us that they are not the kind of guardians in whom we want to place our trust (and our copyrights).

JAMES T. FARRELL.

The Stage & Screen

Present Laughter

IT WOULD be nice to be able to skim something of rage, controversy, or even delight from Noel Coward's latest combination, but I'm afraid it's impossible. The froth is flat. Clifton Webb, in the rôle of a stellar philander, wears a succession of elegant dressing gowns in which he deals with a succession of predatory ladies to no music and small wit, but as a good many of the lines supporting this scheme could not be heard, it is difficult to measure the boredom precisely. Mr. Webb is, of course, worth a good deal more than this, and it is nice to think we shall soon be seeing him on the screen again. Here, his assorted companions are not startling. Evelyn Vardon, with little chance, delivers a comforting performance, and an ingenue, Jan Sterling, is attractive. Doris Dalton is unfortunately still no actress, however a bearskin basket with feathers which she wore on her head throughout the second act, I found absorbing. (*At the Plymouth.*)

Happy Birthday

MY HONORED colleague, Richard Watts in the pages of the New York *Post,* has made a good point, I think, in contrasting the alcoholic flavors of the season's two *written* rather than revived plays. But the point can be stretched still farther, I feel. Even including the revivals, as well as the past lemons, I'm sure there has not been so much of the do-good displayed and drunk before on the stages of the town. Fairly soon one can imagine the concessionaires forced to mix bromo with their sacchariferous orangeade in order to smooth EVERYONE'S hangover.

Anita Loos's spring from the bottle is surely as legitimate as Mary Chase's, somewhat farther uptown. And if her play is feeble, its performance is not. Helen Hayes, having just as much fun as is possible for an astute actress to have (a vast amount, by the way), is extraordinary. Playing a frustrated librarian of Newark, N. J., she is moving, gay, shy, wild, athletic, terpsichorean, euphonic, courageous, and tender. And she looks very pretty indeed. I do think the weaknesses of the latter half of the piece hamper her somewhat. The long over-dramatic explanatory speech at the end is a false note and should be considerably cut and re-thought. And surely one stanza of the Rosetti lyric is enough in the charming under-the-table scene. Otherwise it becomes a recitation rather than a message. On the whole, however, she is wonderful and should certainly be seen rather than read.

The combination of director and designer here is exactly successful. Jo Mielziner's bar set manages, somehow or other, a very necessary sure glamor, even before it rears into hallucination: a technical achievement. And his lighting is excellent. And Joshua Logan, by means of imaginative casting, action, and business, and most of all, by the employment of Robert Russell Bennett's clever moulding music, is as responsible as the star, I think, for the hit. Lorraine Miller, Margaret Irving, Jacqueline Paige, Louis Jean Heyt, Jack Diamond—in fact, all are fine. And if a large number of the stamps and roars fall to Enid Markey's portion of the evening, nothing could please this column more. She has been at the top of the comic list for a long time. (*At the Broadhurst.*)

Derryowen

TWO remarkable features mark the Blackfriars' first of the season, and these will be the acting of Andrée Wallace and Avril Gentles's set—one of the neatest I have seen contrived for a small awkward stage. For Michael O'Hara's play I have nothing to say. It is not only Irish, but slowly and incessantly so, and I am afraid not even Miss Wallace's skilful work, nor the genial support of Gerald Buckley and Dennis Harrison can build it into interest. (*At the Blackfriars's Guild.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Oh to Be in April

THE ENGLISH film tycoon, J. Arthur Rank, who has been protesting (and no doubt rightfully) about the unsatisfactory distribution of English movies in this country, should get a certain amount of pleasure from watching the rise of American interest in British productions. Recent films like "Brief Encounter," "Henry V," "The Seventh Veil," "Caesar and Cleopatra" have won the attention they deserve. Whether or not you like these pictures, you have to admit they frequently have an adultness missing from the general run of Hollywood turn-out. The English, wisely of course, send over their best examples, and in most cases, they can be proud of them.

When you go to *"Notorious Gentleman"* you better leave the kiddies at home—as well as any friends who don't know right from wrong. For this picture makes no soft compromises in telling the story of an unmitigated cad whose morals, to put it mildly, are of a very dubious nature. I wish the film had kept his English title: "A Rake's Progress," for that describes its plot perfectly as its hero goes from bad to worse. Perhaps his only two decent gestures are his not marrying his father's attractive secretary (Margaret Johnston) and his daredevil hero's death in the finale. The main story, told through a long flashback, traces in a Hogarthian fashion the career of Vivian Kenway on the primrose path. Rex Harrison plays the rôle with realistic charm well salted down with cynicism, selfishness and sophistry. After Vivian is kicked out of Oxford in 1931, his desperate family send him to a South American coffee plantation where he disgraces

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himself by not being able to reconcile the company's efforts to make four beans grow where three grew before with the policy of destroying coffee to maintain the price. From then on Vivian just won't settle down; what he does most effectively is to break the hearts of those who love him: his good friend (Griffith Jones) whose wife became his willing victim, his father (Godfrey Tearle), the pretty Jewess (Lilli Palmer) whom he married for a price and rescued from Vienna. The film makes no more pretense of defending Vivian than he makes excuses for himself. "People are what they are." I think it errs on the wishful side, however, in thinking his type is a peculiar product of the 30s and is becoming obsolete. "Notorious Gentleman" is obviously not for people who like light and superficial movies. But as a clinical study of a rake, this well-directed (by Sidney Gilliat), well-written, expertly-acted picture is an outstanding example.

"Johnny Frenchman" tells a story (about competition between two groups of people) that Hollywood films have frequently told in various forms. What distinguishes this version is the fine, unostentatious cast, the good, clear photography of lovely scenery and the leisurely unrolling of a plot whose outcome is obvious from the beginning. For years there has been rivalry between the fishermen from Cornwall and Brittany. In 1939 ill-feeling is heightened when the Cornish catch the French poaching off the coast of Cornwall. But bitterness turns to good will when the Bretons come to the aid of the Cornishmen in landing a large catch of mullet. Then this good will is dissipated later when the Cornish go to France for a tournament, and the fete ends in a near-riot with the conclusion that the English and French were never meant to mix. The falsity of this observation, spoken in anger, is made apparent later when the folk of both countries work well together against a common enemy. Perhaps this story is a bit corny, but as it is enacted in Michael Balcon's production, directed by Charles Frend, it holds your attention through many homely touches and skilful use of fishing scenes in the plot. Furthermore its cast, led by Françoise Rosay and Tom Walls (as heads of the opposing factions), by Patricia Roc and Paul Dupuis (as the daughter of one and the son of the other who fall in love) and its large supporting cast who look and act like real people instead of actors, make "Johnny Frenchman" a pleasant and diverting picture whose message though heart-warming is not cloying.

This can also be said about *"The Raider,"* a film known in England as "Western Approaches," and one that is almost documentary for its simple realism. Photographed in exceptionally good technicolor, this picture, which has no professional actors, mainly tells the story of a lifeboat full of survivors from a torpedoed merchantman. Their struggles to keep alive, their thoughts at sea, their bravery when they realize that a German U-boat is using them as a decoy make thrilling cinema. The fight at the end approaches a melodramatic tone out of keeping with most of the picture, but still "The Raider" is a first-rate war movie that portrays men as men; and it, like these other English films, shows that movies can be exciting without being exaggerated.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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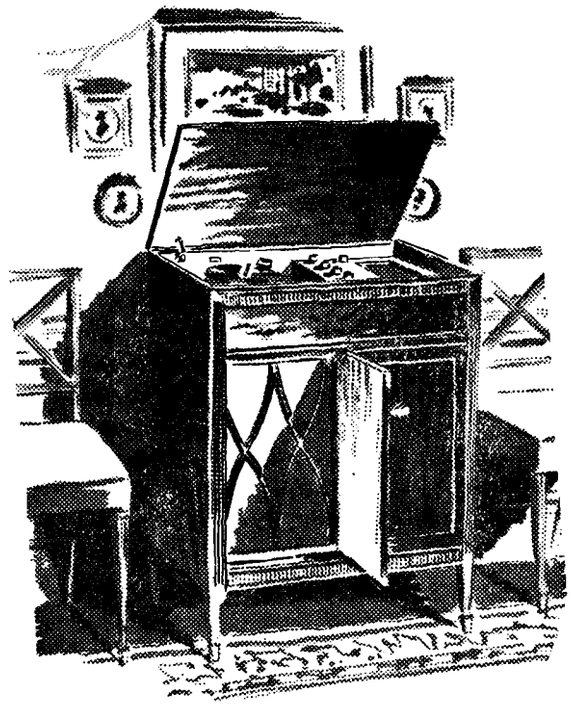

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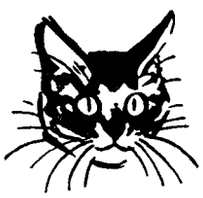

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Children's Books—1946

SHORTAGES of paper and printing facilities continue to make it difficult for publishers to maintain schedules, and some of the strikes have not helped either. The result is this survey of the year's children's books is necessarily somewhat sketchy. I do not think it honest to comment on books I have never seen, yet that is what I should have to do here were I to deal with the field with any high degree of completeness. A further brief account of outstanding books not yet available will be published in THE COMMONWEAL shortly before Christmas.

To me the most startling thing about juvenile literature this year is the number of books relating to religion that are being offered to parents. When first I undertook these annual surveys, books having religious content scarcely ever were issued by general publishers, and those produced by specifically religious houses were of very low quality. Now all this has changed, and Bible stories for children seem almost the largest single category in this branch of publishing. In the United States a general publisher is at once confronted by what might be called technical difficulties when he brings out a book of this sort. First of all, which of the many English translations of the Bible will he use? If he uses a Protestant version, Catholics will feel doubtful about buying his product. If he uses a Catholic version, he is very likely to run into difficulty with Protestant parents, since almost inevitably he will have to include the key difference of which even the least instructed among both Catholics and Protestants are aware: peace on earth *to men of good will*. Since it is generally assumed—probably correctly—that the Protestant market is larger than the Catholic, most books of this sort for American children are based on Protestant versions. The labor of ascertaining in each case whether the material quoted includes errors or ambiguities would be considerable, and hence I think it simpler not to recommend books of this sort for Catholic use. Often when a given volume proves successful with the Protestant market, the publisher will later reissue it with a Catholic text and secure an *imprimatur*. A number of the better collections of Bible stories issued in recent years exist in both editions; here your bookseller can help you.

The Oxford University Press is bringing out as its featured children's book of the year "A Small Child's Bible," by Pelagie Doane. This is available with an *imprimatur*. The stories are well retold and the illustrations are very fine indeed. I most heartily recommend it.

A charming and well-conceived retelling of the story of the Nativity, which avoids the men-of-good-will, good-will-to-men difficulty by cutting the phrase in half and leaving elision dots ("Peace on earth . . ."), is "While Shepherds Watched," written by Marguerite Vance and illustrated by Nedda Walker (Dutton, $1.00). I recommend it highly. Another Nativity story, arranged for possible use as a kindergarten or school pageant, uses the King James version. Apart from this, it is recommended. It is "A Little Child," by Jessie Orton Jones and Elizabeth Orton Jones (Viking, $2.00). A collection of biblical tales completely retold and hence never quoting any Scriptural passages precisely—with one or two minor exceptions—is "God's First Children," by Esther Salminen, illustrated by Kaj and Per Beckman (Roy, $2.00). This is a strikingly handsome book, the illustrations colorful yet not at all sentimental. The text has been written with a good deal of regard to the Old Testament narrative, but with care to offend neither Christians nor Jews. It is by no means a text concerned with theological matters, but rather with retelling the stories for their own sake. I like it very much.

Among the numerous collections of Bible stories in general, I restrict myself to mentioning three, all using Protestant versions. The first is a trifle sentimental, but rather well done. It is "Tell Me about the Bible," by Mary Alice Jones with illustrations by Pelagie Doane (Rand-McNally, $2.00). The other two I single out because the illustrations are incredibly bad, and a warning against them is in order. They are "Picture Stories from the Old Testamant" and "Picture Stories from the Life of Christ," both written by Marion Madison and illustrated by Warner Kreuter (Follett, $1.00 each).

Pleasant religious verse for children between the ages of 6 and 10 constitutes "Sing a Song of Holy Things," by Sister M. Josita, O.S.E. (Tower, $2.00).

What might be called a prayerbook for children is "A Child's Praise" by Beth Merizon. It takes a series of things for which a child should be taught to be thankful and illustrates them with good if sentimental photographs, most of them by Philip Gendreau (Eerdmans, $2.00). Perhaps one of the handsomest of all this year's juveniles is "Sing in Praise" by Opal Wheeler with illustrations by Marjorie Torrey (Dutton, $3.00). Since it consists of a series of Protestant

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hymns, I can scarcely recommend it for Catholic households, but as a gift for Protestant children it would be fine. What particularly adds to its value are the interesting biographical notes concerning the authors of the words and music of the various hymns. And I might note in passing that here as in many other cases there has been a deliberate attempt to indicate the universality of Christianity by having children of various races shown cooperating in their prayer and praise.

I am afraid that I shall have to end this discussion of books of religious inspiration for children on a sour note. "Angel Child," written by Val Teal and illustrated by Pelagie Doane (Rand-McNally, $1.00), is pleasant enough as a story, yet its treatment of the little angel referred to in the title is completely impossible from a theological point of view, since this angel is viewed as a material being with about the same qualities, let us say, as a humming-bird. And finally I warn everyone regarding one of the latest in a series on foreign countries published by Holiday House. "Palestine," by Paul V. Falkenberg with pictures by Rafaello Busoni ($1.00), deals with pictures by Rafaello Busoni (Holiday, $1.00), deals with Christ in a way completely unacceptable to any Christian except, perhaps, to the Unitarians.

★

Three new series of juvenile books deserve a very warm reception on the part of parents, uncles and aunts, grandparents and godparents and friends of the family. One of these is the "Rainbow Classics," under the general editorship of May Lamberton Becker. The illustrations are by a group of our finest contemporary artists—with the one exception of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," where John Tenniel is allowed to reign supreme. Each volume costs $1.00 and is an amazingly good value at the price. So far 18 titles have been issued, including "Black Beauty," "Jane Eyre," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pride and Prejudice," "Treasure Island," "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," "Two Years Before the Mast." The World Publishing Company is to be heartily congratulated for their enterprise in so admirably presenting the classics of childhood.

Grosset & Dunlap likewise has a first-rate collection of juvenile classics. It is issued in three editions, the "popular," which costs $1.00 per volume, the "special," priced at $2.00, the "de luxe," which costs $3.00. So far ten titles are available, among them both Andersen's and Grimms' fairy tales, "Heidi," "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," "Robinson Crusoe," and both "Alices." Again the illustrators chosen are top-notch and again John Tenniel is left alone.

Another first-rate venture is that of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. It has produced a series of 12 "True Nature Picture Stories," each selling for fifty cents. These consist entirely of blown-up shots from moving pictures on natural history themes, and they are really fine. The varieties of animals covered are: kittens, bears, dogs, horses, squirrels, snapping turtles, goats, elephants, rabbits; three of the series deal with miscellaneous animals: "Animals of the Wood," "Water Birds," "Animals of the Farm." The publisher intends to make use of this technique in other connections; it certainly represents an excellent novelty in the field.

★

Many millions of adults must at one time or another have chuckled over the cartoons drawn by J. R. Williams under the general caption "Kids Out Our Way." Scribner has brought out a collection of the best of these ($1.50) published during the decade 1936-46.

Books for Tots

Frankly these are the ones I like best, for here author and artist can spread themselves, letting their imaginations stretch as far as they will. This year cats seem to have had a special appeal to those imaginations. Here are five cat books. Throughout the listings which follow, I give first the name of the author or authors, and second the name of the illustrator. Only when this system seems likely to create confusion do I use a fuller formula.

The Kittens' ABC. Clare Turley Newberry. Harper. $2.00. In my opinion Miss Newberry is the best delineator of cats now living.

Greylock and the Robins. Tom Robinson and Robert Lawson. Viking. $2.00. The story of how a pair of robins worsted a cat with designs on their brood.

The Blot, Little City Cat. Phyllis Crawford and Barbara Cooney. Holt. $1.50. A newsdealer's cat is thrown out when her master falls sick; she has many adventures and finally, upon his recovery, returns to the newsstand.

Grocery Kitty. Helen Hoke and Harry Lees. Reynall. $2.00. About Brillo the mouser and her kittens.

Snoopy Gets a Name. Marion M. Dreyer and Mary Gehr. The Children's Company. $1.00. A white angora kitten.

Christmas is always a productive subject, especially since juvenile books are so often given as Christmas presents. Here are three based on this cheerful festival:

Christmas Tales for Reading Aloud. Compiled and adapted by Robert Lohan, Daye. $3.75. A most inclusive collection, divided under such headings as legends, Santa Claus, poems, adventure, sentiment, humor. Biblical quotations are from the King James version.

Little Janie's Christmas. Virginia and Neville Smith. Follett. $1.00. A most appealingly illustrated story of a dream visit to Saint Nick.

The Story of Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. Alice Holland. and Lillian Desow. The Children's Company. $1.00. It seems nowadays to be necessary to marry off Saint Nicholas. This volume includes "The Night Before Christmas."

Animals in general are of perennial interest. Here is a group of animal stories, all of them pleasant. In each case I indicate the variety of beast where necessary.

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My Dog Rinty. Written by Ellen Tarry and Marie Hall Ets. Photographs by Alexander Alland. Viking. $1.50. This story takes place in Harlem and relates to a Negro boy and his pet dog.

Catch the Dogs. Dorothy S. King. Morrow. $1.50. This is almost a book game, since the dogs are cutouts to be fitted into pockets.

Shadow, the "All-American" Dog. Pearl Daru Snyder. Prang. $1.00.

Nectar—Oolie. Wanda Cheyne. Conjure House. $1.50. This is a "two-story book" concerning a giraffe and an owl.

Charcoal. Lloyd Coe. Crowell. $1.50. A charming account of a black sheep.

Too Many Shoes and Stockings. Irmengarde Eberle and Walton Brashears. Reynall. $1.50. A group of bear families who live in Honeyville.

Lancelot. Marjorie Barrows and Sue Simons. Rand-McNally. $.50. This is a "glowing-eye" book. In the dark the lion's eyes and mouth emit light.

The Donkey Cart. Clyde Robert Bulla and Lois Lenski. Crowell. $2.00.

The Tale of Peter Rabbit. Retold by Edna Aldredge and Jessie McKee. Illustrated by Ferne Bisel Peat. Prang. $.60.

Little Squeegy Bug. Bill and Bernard Martin. Tell-Well. $1.00. Firefly.

The Little Duck Who Loved the Rain. Peter Mabie. Follett. $1.00.

Stepladder Babies. Alta McIntire and Fiore Mastri. Follett. $1.00. A pair of robins build their nest on a stepladder.

Chicken Chuck. Bill and Bernard Martin. Tell-Well. $1.00.

Timothy Turtle. Al Graham and Tony Palazzo. Welch. $2.00. A pleasant, rhymed account of adventures in the life of a land turtle.

Little Fur Family. Margaret Wise Brown and Garth Williams. Harper. $1.50. This book is equipped with a fur jacket.

Pretzel and the Puppies. Margaret Rey and H. A. Rey. Harper. $1.00. Another dachshund story.

The books now listed cover a wide range from plain stories to old favorites. Comment is unnecessary on most of them.

The Little Fire Engine. Lois Lenski. Oxford. $1.00. A sequel to "Little Train," "Little Auto," and numerous others by the same artist.

Linsey Woolsey. Tasha Tudor. Oxford. $.75. This is a calico book about a lamb and two children.

Marta the Doll. Eloise Lownsbery and Marya Werten. Longmans. $2.00. About a farm in the Polish mountains.

Why Teddy Bears Are Brown. Inga-Lill and George Barker. Crowell. $1.00. This is a cautionary tale designed to keep little fingers out of warm fudge. The scene is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

Happy Gingerbread Boy. Caroline H. Mallon and Mary Gehr. The Children's Company. $1.00.

Pat 'n' Penny. Sheena Morey and Martha Scott. Follett. $1.00. Two sisters.

Little-Boy-Dance. Elizabeth Willis de Huff and Gisela Loeffler. Follett. $1.00. Delightful story of a Taos Indian boy who gets lost.

Little Black Sambo. Helen Bannerman and Ferne Bisel Peat. Prang. $.60.

Miss Hickory. Carolyn Sherwin Bailey. Lithographs by Ruth Gannett. Viking. $2.50. The hero of this is a twig-and-nut lady.

The Fat Baron. Clip Boutell and Frank Lieberman.

A Small Child's Bible

By Pelagie Doane

Seventy stories retold for little children and illustrated with seventy beautiful full color illustrations. This valuable and memorable book has received the Imprimatur and will be a beloved volume in all small children's libraries. $3.00

The Three Kings

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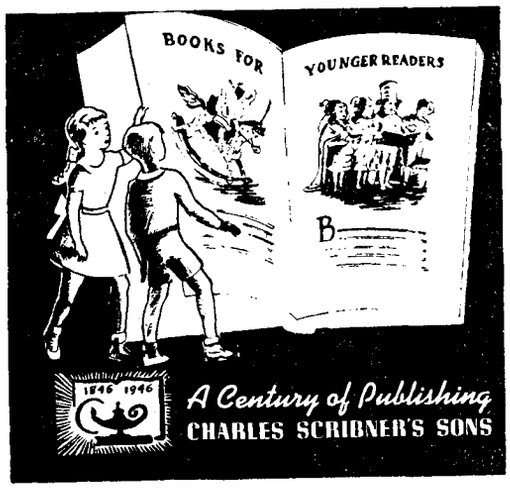

Pedro the Angel of Olvera Street

written and pictured in four colors by

LEO POLITI

Here is the charming and gay story of how little Pedro led the traditional Mexican Christmas procession held on Olvera Street, the original "pueblo" of Los Angeles. Striking color pictures and festival songs make it a delightful gift for all children. $1.75

Gift of the Earth

told and illustrated in four colors by

PACHITA CRESPI

This lovely picture story from Costa Rica, written and illustrated by a Costa Rican, tells how three little country girls longed for a "Mayan" doll and of the surprising treasure found in the earth on Christmas Eve. The bright "Mayan" colors add charm to this true Christmas story of our neighbors across the border. $1.25

Circus School

written and illustrated by

PAUL BROWN

A big picture book about a circus family and all the circus animals. An animal-alphabet and a game to play make it a particularly appealing children's book. $2.00

Old Abe, American Eagle

by LORRAINE SHERWOOD

Illustrated in four colors by Katherine Milhous

Here is a unique American story—of old Abe, the eagle that became the mascot of a Wisconsin regiment during the Civil War. Distinguished illustrations make it a fitting gift book for all ages. $1.50

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

New York

Houghton. $2.00. The story has dietary implications the soundness of which is dubious, but the yarn is a good one.

Story Time with Uncle Mal. Malcolm Claire. American Crayon. $.75. This and the following are based on a children's radio hour. Both contain stories and poems as well as illustrations to color.

Uncle Mal's Favorite Tell It Again Stories. Malcolm Claire. American Crayon. $.75.

The Story of Little Red Riding Hood. Illustrated by Primrose. Follett. $1.00. Retold with a completely happy ending.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Illustrated by Sharon Stearns. Follett. $1.00.

Favorite Fairy Tales from Andersen. Retold by Marie Holz. Illustrated by Sharon Stearns. Follett. $1.00.

Monkeyface. Helen and Alf Evers. Rand-McNally. $.50. A cautionary tale to discourage face-making.

I Sing. Eleska Books. $1.50. A washable cloth book dealing with all sorts of noises.

The Story of the Man in the Moon. Caroline H. Mallon and Mary Gehr. The Children's Company. $1.00. A cautionary tale to allay fear of storms.

Books for Children

In this section I list a number of stories for somewhat older boys and girls, although there will be some overlapping between this section and the first. No particular sequence has been observed, except that the books are roughly listed in the order of thir age-appeal. Of course, as everyone knows, one cannot be too precise about ages, since some children mature intellectually very much faster than others.

Surprise for Timmy. Doris and George Hauman. Macmillan. $1.00. A visit to Grandmother.

Animal Inn. Virginia Moe and Milton Winter. Houghton. $2.50. This is the story of a trailside museum, and is excellent natural history.

The Picture Story of Holland. Dola de Jong and Gerard Hordyk. Reynall. $2.00. An account of Dutch life.

The Happy Island—Bermuda. Sally Lee Woodall. Photographs by Toni Frissell. U. S. Camera. $2.00. A really swell collection of photographs of children enjoying themselves in Bermuda.

The British Isles. William Sloane and Rafaello Busoni. Holiday. $1.00. Good, although it includes some old historical oversimplifications about the Reformation and the Bible.

The Monkey with a Notion. Glenn O. Blough and John F. de Cuir. Holt. $2.00. A monkey in Miss Peasley's petshop.

Circus School. Paul Brown. Scribner. $2.00. Another in a series. It includes an ABC and a game to be played.

Along Janet's Road. Alice Dalgliesh. Scribner. $2.00. Excellent for girls.

The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood. Howard Pyle. Scribner. A new edition from new plates of a wonderful old favorite of which the price will probably be $3.00.

Basketful. The story of our foods. Irmengarde Eberle and Marion R. Cohs. Crowell. $2.00.

The Magical Mimics in Oz. Jack Snow and Frank Kramer. Reilly. $1.75. This is a good if impossible attempt to revive a greatly loved series. The author asks for letters from young readers.

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Too Many Dogs. Quail Hawkins and Kurt Wiese. Holiday. $1.50. A good book for a boy beginning to read for himself.

Elephants. Herbert S. Zim and Joy Buba, Morrow. $2.00. This relates to Asiatic elephants. It would likewise be good for a child learning to read.

Big Tree. Mary and Conrad Buff. Viking. $3.00. A beautifully produced account of the 3,000-year history of a sequoia, introducing various famous human contemporaries as the tree's life unfolds.

Yes and No Stories. George and Helen Papashvily. Drawings by Simon Lissin. Harper. $2.50. Georgian folktales.

It Seems Like Magic. Josephine van Dolzen Pease and Esther Friend. Rand-McNally. $2.50. Natural science in its application to mechanics.

The Golden Encyclopedia. Dorothy A. Bennett and Cornelius de Witt. S. and S. $2.50. Excellent for sports, foods, animals, and other natural things, but objectionable when its definitions impinge on religious matters, which happens rarely.

H.M.S. Pinafore. Adapted by Opal Wheeler. Illustrated by Fritz Kredel. Dutton. $3.00. Including music for the best known songs. One of the best of this year's books.

Narizona's Holiday. Addison Burbank and Covelle Newcomb. Longmans. $2.00. A Mexican yarn.

The Hidden Treasures of Glaston. Eleanore M. Jewett and Frederick T. Chapman. Viking. $2.50. A search for the Grail in medieval England.

One Stormy Day at Sugar Creek. Paul Hutchens. Eerdmans. $.75. A New Sugar Creek Mystery. Paul Hutchens. Eerdmans. $.75.

The Visiting Jimpsons. Irmengarde Eberle and Ruth Kreps. Reynall. $2.00. Visiting in a small upstate New York town.

Make Way for a Sailor. Nora Benjamin Kubie and Harve Stein. Reynall. $2.00. Especially good for those who love sailing.

The Wild Dog of Edmonton. David Grew and Ellen Segner. Reynall. $2.00. For slightly older dog lovers.

River Boy of Kashmir. Jean Bothwell and Margaret Ayer. Morrow. $2.00. Indian children.

Black Jack. Thomas C. Hinkle. Morrow. $2.00. The story of a ranch dog.

Chukchi Hunter. Dorothy Stall and George F. Mason. Morrow. $2.00. The story of hunting on the top of the world in Eastern Siberia.

The End of Long John Silver. David William Moore and Henry C. Pitz. Crowell. $2.00. Another very difficult job of continuation in competition with Robert Louis Stevenson.

On to Oregon! Honoré Morrow and Edward Shenton. Morrow. $2.00. This is a reprint in handsome format with new pictures of a story now almost classic.

Old Abe: American Eagle. Lorraine Sherwood and Katherine Milhous. Scribner. $1.50. A story of an eagle who was a mascot in the Civil War.

The Boys' Book of Engines, Motors and Turbines. Alfred Morgan. Scribner. $2.75. Full instructions for building simple model generators of power using water, electricity, steam and oil.

Ships of the Fleet. Elizabeth Mallett Conger. Holt. $2.00.

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THE TOWER PRESS 631 N. 50TH STREET, MILWAUKEE, WIS.

An excellent account of the physical plant of the United States Navy.

The Heavenly Tenants. William Maxwell and Ilonka Karasz. Harper. $2.00. A story of a family and how the zodiac entered their lives.

Books for Young People

I should first like to list three biographies which are extremely well done. It seems to me that books of this sort are particularly suited to children in their teens.

America's Paul Revere. Esther Forbes and Lynd Ward. Houghton. $2.50. A splendidly illustrated simplified version of the author's excellent study of Paul Revere.

Haydn: A Good Life. David Ewen and Marion R. Kohs. Holt. $2.75. A musical biography with plenty of directly musical material.

Sequoya. Catherine Cate Coblentz and Ralph Ray, Jr. Longmans. $2.50. The life of a Cherokee half-breed who became a great leader of his people.

I have never been over-enthusiastic about what could be called junior novels. I here pick a few titles which seem to me better than average and intended to cover a variety of tastes.

Michael's Victory. Clara Ingram Judson. Houghton. $2.00. An Irish boy in Defiance, Ohio (1854).

Madeleine Takes Command. Ethel C. Brill and Bruce Adams. Whittlesey. $2.00. A novel of the French Canadian heroine, Madeleine de Verchères.

Company of Adventurers. Louise Hall Tharp and Charles B. Wilson. Little. $2.00. The Hudson's Bay Company.

The Good Crop. Elizabeth H. Emerson and Joseph W. Hopkins. Longmans. $2.50. A Quaker family in Illinois during the Civil War.

Castle of Adventure. Enid Blyton and Stuart Tresilian. Macmillan. $2.00. Contemporary young people in the country.

Gateway. Amelia Elizabeth Walden. Morrow. $2.50. A story of contemporary high school life.

Lightning on Ice. Philip Harkins. Morrow. $2.00. High school hockey.

Carol on Tour. Helen Dore Boylston and Major Felten. Atlantic-Little. $2.00. Carol Page goes on tour with the "Merchant of Venice."

Riding High. Leonora Matingly Weber and Gertrude Howe. Crowell. $2.50. A cowgirl story by an experienced horsewoman.

Mountain Pony. Henry V. Larom and Ross Santee. Whitlesey. $2.00. In Wyoming.

Cowdog. Ned Andrews. Morrow. $2.00. For slightly younger boys.

Black Sheep Patrol. Stanley Pashko and Frank Rigney. Roy. $2.50. A tale of scouting, including fighting a forest fire.

Mile High Cabin. Ruth Gipson Plowhead and Johanna E. Lund. Paxton. $2.50. Four young people alone in an Idaho mountain cabin.

Boy from Nebraska. Ralph G. Martin. Introduction by Bill Mauldin. Harper. $2.50. The story of the life of the young Japanese American hero, Ben Kuroki.

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More Books of the Week

Mistress Masham's Repose. T. H. White. Putnam. $2.75.

IT IS difficult not to do this extraordinary book a disservice by praising it with extravagant enthusiasm. In a world which is overgenerous with its superlatives, the use of such terms as great and good may well be questioned. They should not be questioned in this case. "Mistress Masham's Repose" is a masterpiece of narration, literary ingenuity, humor and satire and Mr. White, on the basis of this book, deserves to be mentioned in the company of Evelyn Waugh, C. S. Lewis and George Orwell as one of the few fortunate possessors of a splendid prose style.

The story itself concerns Maria, a ten-year-old orphan who lives at Malplaquet, an enormous ruin four times as large as Buckingham Palace, attended only by a fierce Governess, Miss Brown ("She was cruel in a complicated way"), a repulsive guardian, the Rev. Mr. Hater, and a kind old cook, Mrs. Noakes. Maria consoled herself in these forbidding circumstances by the friendship of Cook and of a delightfully fuzzy old professor who lived nearby; but most of all by living in the world of the imagination. Exploring an islet in one of the lakes of Malplaquet, Maria stumbles on a colony of five hundred Lilliputians, descendants of Captain John Biddel's captives mentioned in "Gulliver's Travels." The book is charged with its own creative power of the imagination, but once it associates its private magic with the powerful illusion of Dean Swift, it moves with an additional energy. The world of Lilliput is alive again.

Maria's delight in her miniscule friends is shortlived. Miss Brown and Mr. Hater discover the secret, and plot to seize and sell the little people to Hollywood. Maria is imprisoned in the dungeon and threatened with death. How she escapes their clutches with the aid of the Lilliputian Army and the old professor, how the estate is restored and the two villains punished, and how it all ends in a most satisfactory Christmas celebration, is the substance of the narrative. It is enough to say here that there are few more exciting tales than this account of the battle between the creatures of wonder and wisdom and the twin giants of avarice and pride.

Mr. White's fantasy differs from the usual fairy story in several important respects. Without spoiling the illusion of the novel, he has succeeded in realizing universal types in his characterizations. The old professor is a priceless portrait of the antiquarian, the Lord Lieutenant a vivid caricature of the eccentric fox-hunting county aristocrat, and the Lilliputian schoolmaster the epitome of rugged honesty, respectability and discretion. The book abounds in humor both of situation and language. Much of its charm for the sophisticated reader consists in a rich and scholarly knowledge, artfully concealed, of eighteenth-century literature, history and architecture. The lovely mustiness of old books and marvelously useless learning lends fragrance and charm to a plot lively enough to make your pulses jump. There are no sermons in the book, but one must be an irretrievable adult not to pick up some wisdom from this delightful story; or from some of the professor's comments such as his gentle reproach to Dr. Swift who was silly enough to laugh at the impractical thinkers of Laputa. "Even if some thinkers are fanciful, it is wrong to make fun of them for it. Better to think about cucumbers even, than not to think at all. . . . Time is revenging itself upon the Dean. It is bringing in, as real inventions, the very ones he made up for ridicule."

Perhaps Mr. White is saying, in a very oblique way, that the world always needs a reminder that innocence, honesty and trust—and impractical learning—will win their way to a happy ending. If he doesn't say it in so many words, he is showing how it can be done for the duration of his novel and for as long after as the memory of it persists. May it be read for the century to come.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

Confessions of a Story Writer. Paul Gallico. Knopf. $3.75.

"YOU TELL me what's wrong with romance," writes Paul Gallico, "and since when."

In this anthology, a collection of 24 of his stories with some working notes on how he did it, Gallico gives you an excellent idea not only of what romance, his kind of short story, means to him, but also what it means to the popular magazines. Entertainment is the criterion. If "people like them" short stories are good. For Gallico that means plucking at the public heart strings, for the magazines it means sensing what the market will absorb.

The writer, even if he lives "a wonderful life" and "comes and goes as he pleases," is working for a business.

"Back on the Daily News," Gallico writes, "I always felt myself a kind of sandwich between two layers of contempt. On the eighth floor was the business department, forever crabbing about the sums of money lavished on the intangibles and imponderables of the editorial department. . . . And below us on the sixth floor was the composing room, under the captaincy of Gus Smith. . . . Gus's reaction to my outpouring of deathless sports prose was contained in his usual greeting: 'Is that crap of yours going to be on time tonight?'"

Though the sandwich may leave the seventh floor the "two layers of contempt" will always be there to keep its proper shape.

If the editors decide that your story's ending is in "bad taste," a favorite expression of genteel business men and armchair generals, you change it and keep it that way. The public must be served.

Gallico also says, preparing for a possible attack by the highbrows: "There is no law that just because a story is bitterly or misanthropically realistic and has a sourpuss ending, it automatically becomes a great piece of literature. My recollection of the classic story-tellers is that the one thing they never neglected was to be entertaining."

In that sense the word "entertaining" covers a multitude of misanthropy. Where does Dostoievski come in?

If Paul Gallico's stories stand out from the usual batch of *Cosmopolitan* romances it is probably because he is an energetic and enthusiastic man. His enthusiasm uncovers "romance" wherever he goes. His stories roll along with a merry love for what is "good," "gay" or "exciting." It's a kid's world. Even if things don't turn out right with the hero, he is still a hero.

But, when these stories take on the pretensions of a book, they seem, as they sit there together, to be full of a loneliness and desperation which no *Cosmopolitan* or *Colliers* editor in his right mind would ever let loose on

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the public. There is no tragedy in them which is not hastily covered up by heroism, no fun which is not hidden by formula. They do not dare to believe. They do not dare to uncover any implications of character or action lest they destroy themselves. It is not as though they were myths or fairy stories—they are afraid of imagination. They try so hard to be heart warming, to clutch at your throat, that it is almost as though they were asking your pity for themselves.

Paul Gallico talks in warming terms about truth, just as he talks about what is noble or good. But how shall we find truth unless we are willing to accept it?

JOHN HAY.

South of Heaven. Lettie Rogers. Random. $2.50.

OBVIOUSLY the author intended to give not only a picture of the China she knew and loved during her childhood, but also a glimpse of the inner and mighty struggle which goes on within a human being having two allegiances, two countries, equally beloved. As it is, the book turns out to be a sad commentary on Americans, Protestant missionaries and Christians in general. There is no doubt that the types portrayed exist. The overwhelming stupidity, the sentimentality believed to be religion, the idealism mistaken for spirituality, and consequently the incapacity for making any human contact either with foreigners—Chinese in this instance—or with one's own people, even with one's own child.

But what is distressing when reading this book is the feeling that the author takes all this shoddy Christianity for granted. The smug and snobbish Hobbs children, the self-satisfied missionary, Anderson, the dreamer, Ward, who continuously tempts God without knowing he does, of course, and Mrs. Ward who makes one feel very strongly that the disciplinary law of the Catholic Church is right—it is better that priests remain single. This happens all to be about Protestant Christianity. Christianity nevertheless.

It is to be hoped that some day, Lettie Rogers, who is still very young, will want to speak of Christians with the same admiration and tender understanding she shows—certainly rightfully—for the Chinese she knew. It is of course up to us Christians. The story moves in the 1920's and there is plenty of action, including the fleeing of people as the army of Chiang Kai-shek drives north. The little American girl, Justine, who feels more Chinese than American, but who is American nevertheless, and the young physician whose father is white and mother Chinese, and who has communistic tendencies, are the two attractive characters, their divided feelings are well studied.

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